

POLICY MEMO:	NO. 15-01
SUBJECT:	<i>Lactation Support for Employees</i>
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TO: Management Group

FROM: Ann M. Busche
Director

DATE: July 15, 2015

Rationale for Policy

In accordance with Minnesota Statute 181.939 and in recognition of the well documented health advantages of breastfeeding for infants and mothers, St. Louis County Public Health & Human Services has deemed it imperative to provide a supportive environment, department-wide, to enable breastfeeding employees to express their milk during work hours.

Policy

St. Louis County Public Health & Human Services subscribes to the following worksite lactation support policy. This policy shall be communicated to all current employees upon its initial adoption and shall be included in new employee orientation training. It is expected that all employees will assist in providing a positive atmosphere of support for breastfeeding employees.

Employer and Employee Responsibilities

The St. Louis County Public Health and Human Services Department, as the Employer, shall provide all of its employees who choose to breastfeed their children with the following resources:

- **Milk Expression Breaks**

Breastfeeding employees shall be allowed to breastfeed or express milk during work hours using their normal breaks and meal times. For time that may be needed beyond the usual break times, employees may use personal leave or may make up the time as negotiated with their supervisor.

- **Lactation Room**

A lactation room, other than a restroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public, will be provided for employees to breastfeed or express milk. The room will be private and sanitary, and shall have an electrical outlet. The door to the room shall have a lock and signage to provide for privacy. If employees prefer, they may also breastfeed or express milk in other comfortable locations agreed upon in consultation with the employee's supervisor. Expressed milk can be stored in County refrigerators. Employees must label all expressed milk. Breastfeeding employees are responsible for keeping milk expression areas clean. When more than one breastfeeding employee needs to use a designated lactation room at the same time, room usage shall occur on a first-come, first-served basis. The use of sign-up sheets can be implemented if the need arises.

- **Breastfeeding Equipment**

Breastfeeding employees will use their own equipment. They may contact Public Health's WIC or Maternal Child Health Team to review a list of breastfeeding equipment and resources

available, or to ask questions or seek assistance. Interested employees would be expected to arrange for this during their personal time.

- **Education**

Prenatal and postpartum breastfeeding informational materials are available for all mothers and fathers, as well as their partners. PHHS Public Health Nurses, who are lactation specialty certified or trained, are available as a part of their job duties to provide this education in a confidential one-on-one setting at work or on a home visit. Interested employees would be expected to arrange for this during their personal time.

- **Communication with the HR Department, department heads and supervisors**

Employees who wish to express milk during the work period shall keep their supervisors advised of any necessary requests to ensure that appropriate accommodations can be made to satisfy the needs of both the employee and the County. The PHHS Senior HR Advisor will assist to coordinate implementation and maintenance of this policy with PHHS managers and Supervisors.

Ramifications for violations of policy

Management and staff will be responsible to protect and promote the policy. Failure on either part shall be addressed through established channels.